



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

## **Administrative Policies and Procedures: 3.15**

---

### **Subject: Control of Long Distance Telephone Calls**

Supersedes: DYD 2.15, 07/01/95

**Local Policy: No**

**Local Procedures: No**

**Training Required: No**

**Approved by:**

**Effective date: 12/31/99**

**Revision date:**

### **Application**

To All Department Of Children's Services Employees.

**Authority:** TCA 37-5-106

### **Policy**

The Department of Children's Services employees shall be responsible for making long distance telephone calls only to carry out their official duties. Any long distance telephone calls placed from state facilities/offices of a personal nature should be conducted on the employee's time using the employee's personal telephone calling card or other appropriate means.

### **Procedures**

#### **A. Official purposes only**

##### **1. Purpose of call**

- a) Before placing a long distance telephone call, employees must determine that the call is necessary to complete assigned duties and does not involve any personal business.
- b) Long distance telephone calls will be closely monitored and abuse of the state telephone system will not be tolerated. An employee may be subject to disciplinary action if it has been proven that abuse has occurred.

##### **2. Personal calls**

- a) Employees must not make personal long distance telephone calls except in an emergency and must use their personal telephone calling cards or other appropriate

means.

- b) Any long distance call represented as an official call and found to be personal in nature must be paid for by the employee who placed the call.

**B. Least expensive means**

**1. State telephone network**

All long distance telephone calls for official state business must be made through the state network system.

**2. Toll telephone calls**

Employees must not make toll calls (dialing 9) except when using credit cards or in facilities that do not have a state network system. In case of an emergency or network lines are busy, toll calls may be made but calls must be documented and an explanation of the circumstances must be submitted to the supervisor or shift leader immediately during the next day during normal business hours or shift rotation.

**C. Cellular telephone calls**

**1. Credit card calls**

- a) Credit card calling cards may be issued to specific individuals for official business purposes with the prior written approval of assistant commissioner of fiscal and administrative services.
- b) Justification and the written approval for credit card calling cards must be attached to the communications service request form GS-0724, *Communications Service Request* which must be processed through the director of administrative services.
- c) Long distances calls for state business charged to a state credit card do not have to be logged.
- d) Long distances telephone calls of a personal nature made in an emergency or otherwise charged to a state credit card, must be logged and reimbursed when the billing is received.

**2. Collect telephone calls**

Collect telephone calls may be accepted in the following cases:

**a) Hardship cases**

- ◆ Employees may accept collect telephone calls from youth, parents and legal guardians for emergencies or in the event of family hardship.
- ◆ The superintendent, DCS community residential facility supervisor or regional administrator or their designees must identify hardship cases.

**b) Collect telephone calls with supervisory approval**

- ◆ Employees must give written justification for all the collect calls they accept.
- ◆ Employees accepting a collect telephone call must submit notification in writing to supervisor of the collect telephone call immediately after the call has been accepted, at end of shift or immediately during the next day during normal business hours or shift rotation, whichever is most expedient under the circumstances.
- ◆ If the supervisor approves the acceptance of the call, he or she must initial the written notification.
- ◆ Any exception to this practice must have the prior written approval of the assistant commissioner of fiscal and administrative services.

**3. Telephone calls to receive information from the work station**

Employees may accept collect telephone calls from employees who, in the performance of their duties, need to receive information from their official work station and do not have access to the state telephone network. The telephone call must be documented so that the call is easily identified when the billing is received.

**D. Documentation of telephone calls****1. Long distance telephone calls**

- a) Long distance telephone calls for state official business, except for personal telephone do not have to be logged. However, it is the responsibility of each unit to review billings each month to detect any irregularities and abuse.
- b) Within fifteen working days after receipt of the telephone billing, each fiscal officer or designee must review telephone calls billed to the facility/office using the following guidelines:
  - ◆ Calls made before and after working hours, including weekends and holidays.
  - ◆ Frequent calls not to a recognizable business number.
  - ◆ Calls which cost more than \$3.00 per call or more than 20 minutes in duration whichever is greater.
  - ◆ Calls to foreign countries, resort areas, or unusual areas of the country.
  - ◆ Collect calls.
  - ◆ Credit card Calls.

- ◆ Toll calls not using the state network

**E. Investigation of unusual call**

The fiscal officer or designated staff responsible for fiscal activities must thoroughly investigate any long distance telephone call appearing to be unusual to determine whether the call is a legitimate business call or personal call.

**F. Annual Review**

On an annual basis the director of internal audit will conduct a review of the effectiveness of the department in monitoring long distance telephone calls and provide suggestions for corrective actions, if needed.

**Forms**

GS-0724      Communications Service Request Form

**Collateral Documents**

*None*

**Standards**

*None*